

INFORMATION REPORT

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COUNTRY Albania/Yugoslavia

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SUBJECT Public Opinion and anti-Communist
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1. Aversion to the present Communist regime of Albania is spreading through all strata of society. At the present time, not only the confirmed anti-Communists and the persons without any party allegiance, but also about seventy percent of those who once believed in Communism, are opposed to the regime. Symptomatic of this growing opposition is the fact that, whereas a year ago even old friends did not trust one another sufficiently to discuss politics, today the few Communist spies and supporters of the Government are so well-known that no one hesitates to speak freely against the regime when among friends. The Government's own propaganda has, contrary to its intention, encouraged opposition by convincing the populace that a war between East and West is near, and will result in Albania's deliverance from Communist domination.
2. A large proportion of the population is ready to rise to aid in the anti-Communist fight when the time appears ripe, and this attitude is encouraged by a large number of nationalist organizations. The best organized of these is that of school teachers and intellectuals, who are able to influence masses of the youth. This organization has its headquarters at Tirana, plus branches throughout the country.
3. It is not believed that any similar resistance movement exists within the Army, however, there are numerous elements among the high-ranking officers, as well as in general throughout the Army, in case of world conflict or national revolution, willing to join in overthrowing the present regime. The Government is aware of this potential opposition, and has therefore limited the distribution of ammunition to men actually performing guard duty: these are allowed not more than five rounds each. On the other hand, most of the subaltern officers are faithful to the regime, for, coming as they do from the laboring classes and being for the most part semi-illiterate, they have a vested interest in its continued existence.
4. While the teachers' and intellectuals' organization mentioned in para. 2 above does not have a full-scale organization in the ranks of the Army, it

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

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nevertheless does enjoy the loyal support of some military men. This organization carries on an active anti-Communist propaganda campaign, and is building up clandestine arms caches. Politically, it is democratic and nationalist in character, and favors unified action among all anti-Communist Parties.

5. In the mountains of the north, small groups of nationalist guerrillas are very numerous. Such groups extend as far south as the Elbasan area, but the strongest are those of Puke, Mirdita, and Mat. The Puke group is led by Ndoc Mirakaj and Pal Bib Mirakaj, that of Mirdita by Major Ndue Bajraktari, and that of Mat by Captain Bilal Kola. A sub-group in the Dukagjin region, headed by Captain Mark Tunxhi and Lieutenant Nik Sokoli, is under the control of the Puke group. In addition, around Peshkopiye, in the Dibra region, there exists a limited number of guerrillas headed by Gen Elezi and Dan Kaloshi. The latter are cooperating with the Yugoslav authorities, and it is not definitely known whether they are at present in Albanian or Yugoslav territory.
6. In the south, particularly in the Tepeleni region, there exists a fairly strong group. On 16 November 1948, this group engaged in a 20-hour battle with elements of the Divisione Mrojte e Popullit, in the course of which eight nationalists and an unstated number of Communists were killed. The well-known Communist, Dine Hoxha, a school teacher in Tepeleni, was captured in the course of the skirmish, held prisoner for two days, then released after being admonished to desist from anti-national activities.
7. On 7 November 1948, in an encounter along the Durres-Elbasan railway, three nationalists and six Communists were killed. In the same month, Captain Rustem Toto, of Delvine, and four other officers of the governmental forces, were captured while travelling between Peqin and Durres.

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